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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : USIS--Guatemala

TOUSI 17
DESP. NO.

TO : USIA--Washington

September 29, 1953
DATE
SEP 30 1953

REF : TOUSI 1, August 13, 1953; TOUSI 12, September 18, 1953

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	REC'D	OTHER

SUBJECT: Government Radio Station Increases Anti-United States Propaganda

USIS Guatemala reports an increase during the past week of anti-United States propaganda over Government-owned and directed radio station TGW in Guatemala City. The September 23 program of The National Hour (La Hora Nacional), although musically an amateur production, combined the best in professional announcing with good technical direction and continuity to produce an outstanding emotional appeal to all Guatemalans to unite in making their country "free, sovereign and independent", with obvious reference to the United States' Aide-Memoire of August 28, 1953, concerning United Fruit Company land expropriation.

The same station's news program "Recortes de Prensa" continues to present slanted reports excoriating the United States. In its program no. 171 of September 28, for example, it was announced that the United States Department of State had refused a passport to a newspaperwoman, Mrs. Beverly Hepburn, "because of her obvious sympathy toward Guatemala...." The same program reported that the American Legion at its last general meeting "ratified the decision to consider colored affiliates as second-class members". Such United States news items are impertinently introduced by several bars of the United States national anthem.

TGW's special programs are often more pointedly offensive. An example was a "cultural" program reporting on a recently held Book Fair at the National Palace, quoting the pro-Communist Book Committee chairman's bitter criticism of United States Spanish-language publications, particularly comic books, which were described as a "morbid North American invention".

According to a report in the independent newspaper Prensa Libre on September 25, 1953, the Government has announced a plan for expansion of its official radio chain, made up at present of three active stations. The Ministry of Communications will spend \$200,000 on new equipment for increasing the

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power of TGW to fifty kilowatts and to provide a new building for the Government radio station; the old TGW equipment will be transferred to the northern city of Cobán in Alta Verapaz, adding another station to the chain. Prensa Libre further reported that The Voice of Mazatenango, located in the Department of Suchitepéquez, will be inaugurated October 20, bringing to five the total of Government stations either in operation or planned for the near future.

In connection with The Voice of Mazatenango, it is interesting to note that for a period of several months the announcers of "Recortes de Prensa" included this station as one of the active transmitters in the Government radio chain.

With the increase in power and coverage, Government-controlled radio may be expected not only to give strong support to the Government press but become an equally powerful propaganda weapon. It cannot be questioned that the synthetic nature of TGW's emotional appeal is admirably suited to the intellectual level of the largely illiterate and semi-literate radio audience.

William A. Krauss
Public Affairs Officer

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